

1 WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

2 1. A method of removing carcass of dead poultry
3 randomly scattered throughout a poultry house having a
4 floor, a width, a length and a longitudinal centerline
5 axis, the method comprising the steps of:

6 arranging items in the poultry house to form
7 unobstructed lanes that extend substantially lengthwise
8 through the poultry house;

9 positioning at least a portion of a conveyor
10 substantially parallel to the longitudinal centerline
11 axis of the poultry house, the conveyor having a movable
12 surface on which the carcasses are placed;

13 while traversing the width of the poultry house
14 along each unobstructed lane of the poultry house,
15 depositing the carcasses of dead poultry found in each
16 unobstructed lane of the poultry house onto the floor of
17 the poultry house at the conveyor;

18 placing all the carcasses collected on the floor of
19 the poultry house onto the surface of the conveyor; and

20 conveying the collected carcasses for removal out of
21 the poultry house using the conveyor.

22 2. A method according to Claim 1, further
23 comprising the step of collecting all the carcasses
24 conveyed out of the poultry house in a container for
25 disposal.

26 3. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step

1 of collecting the carcasses on the conveyor comprises
2 placing all the carcasses collected on the floor onto the
3 conveyor during a single traverse of the length of the
4 poultry.

5 4. A method according to Claim 1, the step of
6 positioning the conveyor further comprises the step of
7 suspending the conveyor off of the floor of the poultry
8 house.

9 5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step
10 of positioning the conveyor comprises positioning the
11 enter length of the conveyor substantially parallel to
12 the longitudinal axis of the poultry house.

13 6. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step
14 of positioning the conveyor comprises positioning the
15 conveyor adjacent to and substantially parallel with an
16 interior perimeter of the poultry house.

17 7. An apparatus for removing carcasses of dead
18 poultry randomly scattered throughout a poultry house
19 having a floor, a width, and a longitudinal centerline
20 axis; wherein items in the poultry house are arranged to
21 form unobstructed lanes that extend substantially
22 lengthwise through the poultry house, the apparatus
23 comprising:

24 a conveyor for conveying the carcasses of dead
25 poultry for removal out of the house, the conveyor having
26 a movable surface on which the carcasses are placed;

1 mean for positioning at least a portion of the
2 conveyor substantially parallel to the longitudinal
3 centerline axis of the poultry house so that the conveyor
4 is suspended off of the floor of the poultry house; and
5 means for driving the surface of the conveyor;
6 wherein, while traversing the width of the poultry
7 house by walking lengthwise along each unobstructed lane
8 of the poultry house, the carcasses of dead poultry found
9 in each unobstructed lane are thrown to the floor of the
10 poultry house at the conveyor and then placed on the
11 surface on the conveyor so that the carcasses are
12 conveyed for removal out of the poultry house by driving
13 the surface of the conveyor.

14 8. An apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the
15 means for positioning the conveyor so that the conveyor
16 is suspended off the floor of the poultry house comprises
17 wires that extend and retract to move the surface of the
18 conveyor between a stored position adjacent a ceiling of
19 the poultry house and an operational position adjacent to
20 the floor of the poultry house which permits easy loading
21 of poultry from the poultry house floor onto the surface
22 of the conveyor.

23 9. An apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the
24 means for positioning the conveyor further comprises
25 means for adjusting the height of the surface of the
26 conveyor above the floor of the poultry house to a height

1 for easy loading of carcasses onto the conveyor.

2 10. An apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the
3 conveyor is position substantially along the longitudinal
4 centerline axis of the poultry house.

5 11. A apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the
6 conveyor comprises a motor driven endless belt looped on
7 and supported by a tray, the belt and tray forming the
8 surface on which the carcasses are placed for removal out
9 of the poultry house by driving the endless belt looped
10 on and supported by a tray.

11 12. An apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the
12 surface of the conveyor is a basket and the means for
13 positioning the conveyor comprises an overhead rail from
14 which the basket is suspended by wheels.

15 13. An apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the
16 overhead rail is position substantially along the
17 longitudinal axis of the poultry house.

18 14. An apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the
19 overhead rail extends adjacent to an interior perimeter
20 of the poultry house.

21 15. An apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the
22 overhead rail a closed loop that extends adjacent to an
23 interior perimeter of the house.

24 16. An apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the
25 basket suspended from the overhead rail for manual
26 rolling along the rail.

1 17. An apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the
2 basket is substantially open on all sides so that the
3 carcasses of dead poultry are placed into the basket from
4 any side of the basket and wherein the basket is large
5 enough to hold all the carcasses of dead poultry
6 collected during a single traverse of the width of the
7 poultry house regardless of the size and age of the
8 poultry.

9 18. An apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the
10 means for positioning the conveyor further comprises a
11 motor driven wheel, wherein the basket is moved along the
12 rail under the control of the motor driven wheel.

13 19. An apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the
14 conveyor further comprises a remote control, hand-held
15 device for controlling the operation of the motor driven
16 wheels so that the position of the basket on the overhead
17 rail is controlled by the remote control device.